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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Earth's arms are wide to her . . . what breast
Offers such gentle sleeping?
Her limbs lie peacefully.

From the dark West
Comes down a note like the echoing cry
Of one who rides through the dusk alone
After the hunt sweeps by.

It fades—the night wind is forlorn—
Music is still:
But Maura has followed the silver horn
Over the distant hill,
Over the hill where all winds die.

TWO DESIGNS

A JAPANESE VASE WROUGHT IN METALS

Five harsh black birds in shining bronze come crying
Into a silver sky.
Piercing and jubilant is the shape of their flying;
Their beaks are pointed with delight,
Curved sharply with desire.
The passionate direction of their flight,
Clear and high,

Marjorie Allen Sciffert

Stretches their bodies taut like humming wire.
The cold wind blows into angry patterns the jet-bright
Feathers of their wings;
Their claws curl loosely, safely, about nothingness—
They clasp no things.
Direction and desire they possess,
By which in sharp, unswerving flight they hold
Across an iron sea to the golden beach
Whereon lies carrion, their feast: a shore of gold
That birds wrought on a vase can never reach.

LORENZO'S BAS-RELIEF FOR A FLORENTINE CHEST

Lust is the oldest lion of them all
And he shall have first place;
With a malignant growl satirical
To curve in foliations prodigal
Round and around his face,
Extending till the echoes interlace
With Pride and Prudence, two cranes gaunt and tall.

Four lesser lions crouch and malign the cranes.
Cursing and gossiping, they shake their manes,
While from their long tongues leak
Drops of thin venom as they speak:
The cranes, unmoved, peck grapes and grains
From a huge cornucopia, which rains